

Amendments to the Claims:

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of generating color data for image formation in a color image forming device by converting data of color values for three colors of cyan, magenta, and yellow, representing a color image to be formed, into data of color values for four colors of cyan, magenta, yellow, and black, the method comprising:

preparing a plurality of black data generating tables which have different black data conversion characteristics from one another;

receiving a set of color data including color values for three colors of cyan, magenta, and yellow;

extracting a minimum value among the three color values in the received set of color data;

selecting a-only one black data generating table dependently on color of the extracted minimum value; and value irrespective of whether the three color values in the received set of color data are different from one another; and

generating a value for black using the selected black data generating table and based on the extracted minimum value.

2. (Original) A method according to Claim 1, further comprising the step of correcting the color values for cyan, magenta, and yellow in the received color data set by subtracting the generated value for black from the three values for cyan, magenta, and yellow, respectively.

3. (Original) A method according to Claim 1, wherein the plurality of black data generating tables include three different tables, each having a one-on-one correspondence with one of cyan, magenta, and yellow.

4. (Original) A method according to Claim 3, wherein each of the three black data generating tables is configured to allow the value for black to increase as the value of a corresponding color value increases and to allow the rate of change for the value for black to decrease as the value of the corresponding color value approaches a predetermined maximum.

5. (Original) A method according to Claim 1, wherein the black data generating tables include two tables associated with cyan and yellow, and the table selecting process selects one of the two tables when the extracted minimum value is for magenta.

6. (Original) A method according to Claim 5, further comprising a step of previously determining one of the two tables that is to be selected for magenta.

7. (Original) A method according to Claim 1, wherein one of the plurality of black data generating tables is a first table configured to allow the black data generating step to generate a value or zero for black when the value of the corresponding color is less than or equal to a first prescribed limit value.

8. (Original) A method according to Claim 7, wherein another one of the plurality of black data generating tables is a second table configured to allow the black data generating step to generate a value or zero for black when the value of the corresponding color is less than or equal to a second prescribed value that is smaller than the first prescribed limit value.

9. (Original) A method according to Claim 7, wherein the first table is a black data generating table for cyan that is selected when the extracted minimum value is for cyan.

10. (Original) A method according to Claim 8, wherein the second table is a black data generating table for yellow that is selected when the extracted minimum value is for yellow.

11. (Currently Amended) A color data generating device, provided in a color image forming device, for generating color data for image formation by converting data of

color values for three colors of cyan, magenta, and yellow, representing a color image to be formed, into data of color values for four colors of cyan, magenta, yellow, and black, the device comprising:

a table storage portion storing a plurality of black data generating tables which have different black data conversion characteristics from one another;

an input portion receiving a set of color data including color values for three colors of cyan, magenta, and yellow;

an extracting portion extracting a minimum value among the three color values in the received set of color data;

a table selecting portion selecting ~~a~~only one black data generating table dependently on color of the extracted minimum ~~value; and~~value irrespective of whether the three color values in the received set of color data are different from one another; and

a black generating portion generating a value for black using the selected black data generating table and based on the extracted minimum value.

12. (Original) A color data generating device according to Claim 11, further comprising a correcting portion correcting the color values for cyan, magenta, and yellow in the received color data set by subtracting the generated value for black from the three values for cyan, magenta, and yellow, respectively.

13. (Original) A color data generating device according to Claim 11, wherein the plurality of black data generating tables include three different tables, each having a one-on-one correspondence with one of cyan, magenta, and yellow.

14. (Original) A color data generating device according to Claim 13, wherein each of the three black data generating tables is configured to allow the value for black to increase as the value of a corresponding color value increases and to allow the rate of change

for the value for black to decrease as the value of the corresponding color value approaches a predetermined maximum.

15. (Original) A color data generating device according to Claim 11, wherein the black data generating tables include two tables associated with cyan and yellow, and the table selecting portion selects one of the two tables when the extracted minimum value is for magenta.

16. (Original) A color data generating device according to Claim 15, further comprising a memory previously set with data indicative of one of the two tables that is to be selected for magenta by the table selecting portion.

17. (Original) A color data generating device according to Claim 11, wherein one of the plurality of black data generating tables is a first table configured to allow the black data generating portion to generate a value or zero for black when the value of the corresponding color is less than or equal to a first prescribed limit value.

18. (Original) A color data generating device according to Claim 17, wherein another one of the plurality of black data generating tables is a second table configured to allow the black data generating portion to generate a value or zero for black when the value of the corresponding color is less than or equal to a second prescribed value that is smaller than the first prescribed limit value.

19. (Original) A color data generating device according to Claim 17, wherein the first table is a black data generating table for cyan that is selected by the table selecting portion when the extracted minimum value is for cyan.

20. (Original) A color data generating device according to Claim 18, wherein the second table is a black data generating table for yellow that is selected by the table selecting portion when the extracted minimum value is for yellow.

21. (New) A method of generating color data for image formation in a color image forming device by converting data of color values for three colors of cyan, magenta, and yellow, representing a color image to be formed, into data of color values for four colors of cyan, magenta, yellow, and black, the method comprising:

preparing a plurality of black data generating tables which have different black data conversion characteristics from one another;

receiving a set of color data including color values for three colors of cyan, magenta, and yellow;

extracting a minimum value among the three color values in the received set of color data;

selecting a black data generating table dependently on color of the extracted minimum value;

generating a value for black using the selected black data generating table and based on the extracted minimum value; and

correcting the color values for cyan, magenta, and yellow in the received color data set by subtracting the generated value for black from the three values for cyan, magenta, and yellow, respectively.

22. (New) A method according to Claim 21,

wherein the preparing the plurality of black data generating tables prepares at least two black data generating tables which are for at least two colors among three colors of cyan, magenta, and yellow, and which have different black data conversion characteristics from one another, each black data generating table indicating corresponding black data conversion characteristics, in which an output black data value varies in accordance with change of an input value of a corresponding color;

wherein the selecting selects, from among the at least two black data generating tables, a black data generating table dependently on color of the extracted minimum value; and

wherein the generating generates the value for black using the selected black data generating table and based on the extracted minimum value.

23. (New) A color data generating device, provided in a color image forming device, for generating color data for image formation by converting data of color values for three colors of cyan, magenta, and yellow, representing a color image to be formed, into data of color values for four colors of cyan, magenta, yellow, and black, the device comprising:

a table storage portion storing a plurality of black data generating tables which have different black data conversion characteristics from one another;

an input portion receiving a set of color data including color values for three colors of cyan, magenta, and yellow;

an extracting portion extracting a minimum value among the three color values in the received set of color data;

a table selecting portion selecting a black data generating table dependently on color of the extracted minimum value;

a black generating portion generating a value for black using the selected black data generating table and based on the extracted minimum value; and

a correcting portion correcting the color values for cyan, magenta, and yellow in the received color data set by subtracting the generated value for black from the three values for cyan, magenta, and yellow, respectively.

24. (New) A color data generating device according to Claim 23,

wherein the table storage portion stores at least two black data generating tables which are for at least two colors among three colors of cyan, magenta, and yellow, and

which have different black data conversion characteristics from one another, each black data generating table indicating corresponding black data conversion characteristics, in which an output black data value varies in accordance with change of an input value of a corresponding color;

wherein the table selecting portion selects, from among the at least two black data generating tables, a black data generating table dependently on color of the extracted minimum value; and

wherein the black generating portion generates the value for black using the selected black data generating table and based on the extracted minimum value.